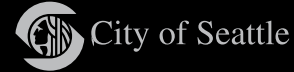
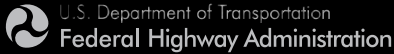


The Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project

06.06



What other options were evaluated?

Tunnel Under Western Avenue

The cut-and-cover tunnel and elevated structure were chosen by WSDOT, the City of Seattle, and FHWA out of an original list of 76 concepts. Replacing the viaduct is a major project that will dramatically affect a critical transportation route through Seattle. Since this is a significant decision, ideas continue coming in, and people ask us to reconsider concepts previously eliminated. We have made diligent efforts to evaluate the promising suggestions. **This fact sheet is one in a series that describes a proposed idea, how it was evaluated, and why the project team determined it's not the best solution.** We cannot afford to wait forever to replace the viaduct and seawall, but public input is very important. When a final decision is made on a solution for replacing the viaduct, we want the public to understand how we came to that conclusion.

Why was a Western Avenue tunnel proposed?

We hear several reasons why people believe it is the right solution:

- A tunnel on Western Avenue would move a major construction project away from the waterfront piers that only have land access from Alaskan Way.
- The seawall would be replaced in smaller projects over a long period of time, again eliminating a major construction project in front of waterfront businesses.



The seawall is deteriorating and must be replaced.

What are some of the issues?

• **This idea doesn't fix the seawall.**

Investigations have told us the seawall needs to be replaced. One reason the cut-and-cover tunnel under Alaskan Way works well is because the west wall can double as the seawall, saving time and money.

• **We don't think it is possible to avoid a major construction project on the waterfront.**

Construction will be necessary to fix the seawall, and we will need large areas for construction vehicles and staging regardless of the exact project location. Fixing it in small increments over a long time simply means that the waterfront would be a major construction zone for much longer.

• **Western Avenue is much narrower than Alaskan Way.**

The width of Western Avenue would require a much narrower tunnel and several

What did we study?

When members of the public propose an option, it is often just an idea they've had. We need a specific design or concept to evaluate. For this idea, we evaluated the following concept:

- Construct a cut-and-cover tunnel under Western Avenue, veering from the current planned tunnel entrance near South Washington Street.
- Immediately north of Pike Street, the tunnel curves again to the west and creates an 'S' curve to avoid the existing BNSF railroad tunnel, and becomes an aerial structure. It rejoins the current tunnel design around the Belltown area.



The Western Avenue corridor is much narrower than Alaskan Way, making it a poor location for SR 99.

sharp curves in the alignment. The narrow tunnel will not safely accommodate traffic, and such sharp curves would only allow for a speed limit of 30 miles per hour with current traffic safety standards. In addition, the right-of-way available within Western Avenue is about a third of that available on the waterfront, leaving little room for the existing utilities in the corridor or the ventilation and emergency access needed for a tunnel. Additional areas of downtown would be impacted by construction since utilities still must be moved to

other streets.

- **Too many businesses and residents are unnecessarily displaced.** Up to thirteen buildings, including four historic buildings, would have to be removed to create a safe traffic corridor.

For More Information:

Visit the Web site at:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct

Call the hotline:

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Send a letter to:

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